

CLAIMS

The invention claimed is:

1. A remote control comprising:

a plurality of hard keys comprising at least one control group of
5 keys;

a touch screen operably connected and adapted:

to display a plurality of soft keys corresponding to a plurality
of device types controllable by the one control group of
keys and

10 to display at least one of a plurality of device type indicators,
wherein

the one device type indicator displayed corresponds to a
device the one control group of keys is assigned to
control; and

15 memory comprising programming for entering a set up mode and
assigning a device to be controlled to the one control group
of keys, wherein the programming for assigning a device to
be controlled comprises programming for:

20 assigning, in response to selection of one of the soft
keys by a user, a corresponding one of the
plurality of device types to the one control group
of keys, and

displaying a device type indicator corresponding to the
device type assigned to the one control group of
keys.

2. The remote control Claim 1, wherein:

5 the plurality of hard keys comprises a second control group of
keys; and

the touch screen is operably connected and adapted to display a
second device type indicator visually associated with the
second control group of keys.

10 3. The remote control of Claim 1, wherein:

the one control group is a channel control group; and
the second control group is a volume control group.

4. The remote control of Claim 1, wherein the programming for entering
a set up mode comprises programming for displaying the soft keys
15 corresponding to the plurality of device types controllable by the one
control group of keys.

5. A remote control comprising:

a plurality of hard keys comprising a channel control group of keys
and a volume control group of keys;

a screen displaying a first one of a plurality of device type indicators and a second one of a plurality of device type indicators;

visual indicia associating the first device type indicator with the channel control group of keys and the second device type indicator with the volume control group of keys,

whereby a user may readily discern which device the channel control group of keys is set to control and which device the volume control group of keys is set to control.

6. The remote control of Claim 5, wherein the touch screen displays a plurality of soft keys, each corresponding to a device type at least one group of keys from volume control group of keys and the channel control group of keys may be set to control.

7. The remote control of Claim 6, wherein the touch screen displays the plurality of soft keys in response to a user initiating a set up mode to set at least one of the control groups of keys to control a device type.

8. The remote control of Claim 6, comprising:
programming for setting a control group of keys to one of a plurality of device types in response to a user selecting a soft key corresponding to the one of a plurality of device types;
and

programming for displaying on the touch screen a corresponding
one of a plurality of device type indicators.

9. The remote control of Claim 5, wherein the visual indicia comprises a
stylistic marking.

5 10. The remote control of Claim 5, wherein the visual indicia comprises
a stylistic physical design of the remote control.

11. A remote control comprising:

a plurality of keys comprising at least one control group of keys;

10 a display displaying at least one of a plurality of device type
indicators; and

visual indicia associating the one displayed device type indicator
with the one control group of keys,

whereby a user may readily discern which device the control group
of keys is set to control.

15 12. The remote control of Claim 11, wherein the one control group of
keys are hard keys.

13. The remote control of Claim 11, wherein the display displaying the
device type indicator is a touch screen.

14. The remote control of Claim 13, wherein the remote enters a set up mode in response to a user selecting the displayed device type indicator.

15. The remote control of Claim 11, wherein:

5 the plurality of keys comprises a plurality of keys corresponding to a plurality of device types; and
the control group of keys is set to control a device corresponding one of the device type keys in response to a user selecting the one device type key.

10 16. The remote control of Claim 15, comprising a touch screen, wherein the device type keys are soft keys displayed on the touch screen.

17. The remote control of Claim 16, wherein the touch screen comprises the display displaying the device type indicator.

15 18. The remote control of Claim 17, wherein the remote control enters a set up mode in response to a user selecting the displayed device type indicator.

19. The remote control of Claim 18, wherein the soft keys corresponding the device types are displayed on the touch screen in response to the user initiating the set up mode.

20. A remote control comprising:

a plurality of keys comprising a first control group of keys and a
second control group of keys;

a first device type indicator of a first plurality of device type
5 indicators, wherein

the first plurality of device type indicators correspond
to devices the first control group of keys may be
set to control and

the first device type indicator is visually associated
10 with the first control group of keys,

whereby a user may readily discern which device the
first control group of keys is set to control based
on the first device type indicator visually
associated with the first control group of keys;
15 and

a second device type indicator of a second plurality of device type
indicators, wherein

the second plurality of device type indicators
correspond to devices the second control group
20 of keys may be set to control and

the second device type indicator is visually associated
with the second control group of keys, and

whereby a user may readily discern which device the
second control group of keys is set to control
based on the second device type indicator
visually associated with the first control group of
5 keys; and wherein

the first device type indicator is different from the second device
type indicator.

21. The remote control of Claim 20, comprising:

10 a first plurality of device type keys corresponding to devices the
first control group of keys may be set to control upon
selection of one of the first plurality of device type keys;

a second plurality of device type keys corresponding to devices the
second control group of keys may be set to control upon
election of one of the second plurality of device type keys;
15 and wherein

the first plurality and the second plurality of device type keys are
soft keys.

22. The remote control of Claim 21, wherein the first plurality of device
type keys is the same as the second plurality of device type keys.

23. The remote control of Claim 21, comprising a touch screen, wherein the soft keys, the first device type indicator, and the second device type indicator are displayed on the touch screen.
24. The remote control of Claim 23, wherein the first plurality of device
5 type keys are displayed in response to a user selecting the first device type indicator.
25. A touch screen for use in a remote control, the touch screen adapted to comprise:
- 10 a first device type indicator to indicate a device type a first control group of keys is set to control;
- a second device type indicator to indicate a device type a second control group of keys is set to control; and
- a third device type indicator to indicate a master control mode of the remote control.
- 15 26. A method of configuring a remote control comprising a display screen, the method comprising:
- displaying a first device type indicator to indicate a device type a first control group of keys is set to control;
- in response to a user initiating a set up mode for the first control
20 group of keys, displaying a first plurality of device types the first control group of keys may be set to control;

in response to a user selecting one of the first plurality of device types, setting the first control group of keys to control a device corresponding to the selected one of the first plurality of device types;

- 5 replacing the first device type indicator with a device type indicator corresponding to the selected one of the first plurality of device types; and
exiting the set up mode.

27. The method of Claim 26, wherein the display screen comprises a touch screen and the method comprises:

- 10 sensing a user selecting the first device type indicator via the touch screen; and
in response to sensing the user selecting the first device type indicator, initiating the set up mode for the first control
15 group of keys.

28. The method of Claim 26, wherein the display screen comprises a touch screen and the method comprises:

- sensing a user selecting the one of the first plurality of device types via the touch screen; and
20 in response to sensing the user selecting the one of the first plurality of device types, setting the first control group of

keys to control the device corresponding to the selected device type.

29. The method of Claim 26, comprising displaying a second device type indicator contemporaneously with the first device type indicator, wherein the second device type indicator indicates a device type a second control group of keys is set to control.

30. The method of Claim 29, comprising displaying a third device type indicator, wherein the third device type indicator indicates to which master control mode the remote control is set.

31. A method of manufacturing a remote control, the method comprising:

visually associating a first control group of keys with a first device type indicator

adapting the first device type indicator to indicate one of a plurality of available device types corresponding to a plurality of devices the first control group of keys may be set to control;

visually associating a second control group of keys with a second device type indicator; and

adapting the second device type indicator to indicate one of a plurality of available device types corresponding to a

plurality of devices the second control group of keys may be set to control.

32. The method of Claim 31, comprising causing a display to contemporaneously display the first device type indicator, the second device type indicator, and a master mode indicator, wherein the master mode indicator indicates in which mode the remote control is set.

33. The method of Claim 31, comprising causing a touch screen to display the plurality of device types the first control group of keys may be set to control.

34. The method of Claim 33, comprising causing the touch screen to display, in response to a user selecting the first device type indicator, the plurality of device types the first control group of keys may be set to control.

35. A computer readable medium for use in a remote control comprising a display, the medium comprising programming for:

displaying a first device type indicator, wherein the first device type indicator indicates a device type a first control group of keys is set to control;

setting the first control group of keys to control a device type selected by a user from a plurality of device types;

displaying the plurality of device types the first control group of
keys may be set to control; and

displaying a second device type indicator contemporaneously with
the first device type indicator, wherein the second device
type indicator indicates a device type a second control group
of keys is set to control.

36. The medium of Claim 35, comprising programming for displaying a
master mode indicator contemporaneously with the first and second
device type indicators.

37. The medium of Claim 36, comprising programming for displaying a
plurality of soft keys associated with a master mode corresponding
to the master mode indicator displayed.

38. The medium of Claim 37, comprising programming for displaying the
soft keys associated with the indicated master mode as a default.

39. The medium of Claim 38, comprising programming for replacing the
displayed master mode soft keys with the plurality of device types
the first control group of keys may be set to control during a set up
mode for the first control group of keys.

40. A remote control comprising:

a first control group of keys set to control one of a plurality of devices;

means for indicating to a user which of the plurality of devices the first control group of keys is set to control;

5 a second control group of keys set to control one of a plurality of devices;

means for indicating to a user which of the plurality of devices the second control group of keys is set to control;

10 means for setting the first control group of keys to a different one of the plurality of devices; and

means for indicating to a user a selection comprising the plurality of devices from which the user may select the different one device.

15 41. The remote control of Claim 40, comprising means for indicating to a user in which master mode the remote control is set.

42. The remote control of Claim 41, wherein the means for indicating which device is controlled by the first control group of keys, the means for indicating which device is controlled by the second control group of keys, and the means for indicating the master mode are
20 adapted to operate simultaneously.